

TRIBUTE TO JASMINE CLARK

HON. LYNN A. WESTMORELAND

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 7, 2007

Mr. WESTMORELAND. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a champion athlete from Georgia's 3rd Congressional District.

Jasmine Clark, a 9-year-old from Tyrone, took her taekwondo skills to the 2007 Junior Olympics in July and came home with a gold medal. Jasmine's victory earns her the title of national champion for female blue belts in her age range.

Jasmine began competing in taekwondo just three years ago but quickly proved to be a natural. Nevertheless, she entered the Junior Olympics as an underdog, and with grit and determination took the gold in the elite open division and then the world class division.

Every champion, of course, has a supporting cast that plays an important role in any victory. For Jasmine, those supporters include her parents, Louis and Yongmi Clark, and her coach at Tiger Martial Arts in Fayetteville, Ehud Kojak. These mentors rightfully bask in Jasmine's reflected glory.

I join Jasmine's peers and teachers at Robert J. Burch Elementary School and the people of Fayette County in stating our pride in Jasmine's gold medal victory in taekwondo at the Junior Olympics. I hope and trust that this is merely the opening of an outstanding athletic career for Jasmine Clark. I congratulate her and wish her the best in all her future endeavors in the sport.

IN HONOR OF JAMES F. DRAKE

HON. JO BONNER

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 7, 2007

Mr. BONNER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to one of Mobile's finest sons, James F. Drake, a survivor of the Bataan Death March, who spent 42 months as a prisoner of the Japanese during World War II.

In April 1942, James Drake was a young mess sergeant with the Army Air Corps' 27th Bomb Group when he was captured along with the nearly 75,000 Filipino and American soldiers by the Japanese. The captives were forced to march to a prison camp more than 60 miles away without food or water. Thousands of the prisoners died during the week-long march that became known as the Bataan Death March. During the 42 months Mr. Drake was held prisoner at Camp O'Donnell, he survived on small helpings of rice. Upon his release, he weighed a mere 89 pounds.

In the 65 years that followed, Mr. Drake dedicated his life to caring for others. Due to the injuries he received as a prisoner of war, Mr. Drake had to have one of his legs amputated; however, he was known for driving fellow veterans to VA facilities for medical treatment in Biloxi, Montgomery, and Pensacola.

Mr. Drake was inducted into the Alabama Military Hall of Honor in 2000 and named a Mobile Veteran of the Year in 2005. He truly was the embodiment of service to country.

Madam Speaker, the life and actions of James Drake personified the very best of

America. I feel certain his many friends and family, while mourning the loss of this courageous man, are also taking this opportunity to remember his many accomplishments and to recall the fine gift they each received simply from knowing him and having him as an integral part of their lives. I urge my colleagues to take a moment and pay tribute to James Drake and his selfless devotion to our country and the freedom we enjoy.

Make no mistake; James Drake was a true American hero.

TRIBUTE TO DR. RONALD M. SEGA

HON. MARK UDALL

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 7, 2007

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. Madam Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge the retirement of Dr. Ronald Sega, Under Secretary of the Air Force, and to recognize him for his distinguished public service as Director of Defense Research and Engineering, Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics, from August 2001 to July 2005; and as Under Secretary of the Air Force, from August 2005 to August 2007.

As the Chief Technology Officer for the Department of Defense, Dr. Sega interacted with the Executive Branch, Congress, industry, academia, and other Federal agencies to develop strategies and support plans to align scientific research and engineering development with Department goals and objectives to ensure U.S. military technological superiority. Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the Nation, he established the Department of Defense Combating Terrorism Technology Task Force to spearhead the rapid development and fielding of defense capabilities critical to the successful execution of military operations in support of the global war on terrorism. Dr. Sega established Department of Defense technology focus areas on energy and power technology, surveillance and knowledge systems, and in the National Aerospace Initiative to guide investment and capitalize on emerging technological opportunities. Dr. Sega's tireless efforts and diplomacy significantly advanced Defense Department international engagement and cooperation.

As the Under Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. Sega oversaw, on behalf of the Secretary of the Air Force, the recruiting, training, and equipping of approximately 690,000 airmen and a budget of approximately \$110 billion committed to the effective integration of air, space, and cyberspace capabilities in support of the Nation's defense. As the designated Department of Defense Executive Agent for Space, Dr. Sega developed, coordinated, and integrated plans and programs across the national security space enterprise instituting a back-to-basics approach to space acquisition which redistributed risk from system procurement to early-stage science and technology activities. He also established the Operationally Responsive Space Office to launch, activate, and employ low-cost satellites to provide surge capability, to reconstitute or augment existing constellation, or to provide timely availability of tailored or new capabilities. As the Air Force Senior Executive for Energy, he led the development of the Air Force Energy

Strategy to incorporate energy consideration in all Air Force operations. Dr. Sega instituted best business practices in defense space acquisition, championed advances in the science and technology workforce, and tirelessly supported the Nation's men and women in uniform.

Dr. Sega is an extraordinary leader, patriot, and intellectual whose distinctive accomplishments reflect great credit upon himself and the Department of Defense. I am particularly pleased that he will return to Colorado to share his skills and experience as vice president at the Colorado State University Research Foundation and as a professor of systems engineering at Colorado State University.

I hope my colleagues will join me not only in recognizing the past accomplishments of Dr. Sega but also in wishing him all the best in his future pursuits.

IN MEMORY OF DONOVAN WITHAM

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 7, 2007

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Specialist Donovan D. Witham of Malvern, Arkansas, who died on August 20, 2007, fighting for our country in Iraq while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was 20 years old when he selflessly gave his life for his country during combat operations.

Specialist Witham graduated from Glen Rose High School in 2005 where he was active in athletics and numerous extracurricular activities as a student. As a member of the student council, drama club and choir, as well as the football and track teams, he was a natural leader who demonstrated hard work and teamwork both in the classroom and on the field. Before joining the Army, he continued to give back to his community and state by working at the Ouachita River Correctional Unit. He was also an avid sportsman who enjoyed hunting and fishing at every opportunity.

Specialist Witham joined the Army in November 2005, and his proud service will continue to live on and serve as an inspiration to the many soldiers who knew him and fought alongside him in combat. He was a military police officer with the 1st Squadron, 73rd Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, in the 82nd Airborne Division. His bravery and courage as a military police officer and as a paratrooper were exemplified by his numerous awards and military decorations, including the Bronze Star Medal and the Purple Heart Medal.

Specialist Donovan Witham gave his life to serve our country and he will forever be remembered as a leader, a hero, a son, a brother and a friend. My deepest condolences go out to his mother, Martha Launius, and his stepfather, Richard Launius of Malvern; and his three sisters, Amber Sharp of Magnolia, Jamie Witham of Benton and Virginia Bennett of Magnolia. He will be missed by his family, his community, his country and all those who knew him. I will continue to keep Specialist Donovan Witham's family in my deepest thoughts and prayers.